

## **Virology**

### **Virology Specimen Shipping Instructions:**

1. Collect specimens for virus culture and PCR testing as early as possible in the acute stage of illness. Acceptable specimens may include the following: isolates, NP swabs or throat swabs, stools or rectal swabs, body fluids, lesion swabs or scrapings, biopsy tissue (no preservative), and post-mortem tissues (no preservative) depending on the suspected virus. Swabs must be placed in 2-3mL of viral transport media such as M4, M4-RT, UTM-RT, etc.
2. Refrigerate specimens for virus culture and PCR testing immediately after collection. Ship specimens for next day delivery using ice packs (or dry ice if specimen is frozen) in a heavily insulated box. Pack specimens to prevent breakage or spillage and to conform to shipping regulations.
3. Viral recovery may be complicated if specimens are not shipped refrigerated immediately after collection. If immediate shipment, for delivery to the ISDH Labs within 24 hours, is not possible, refrigerate or freeze specimens at -70°C or below. Do not store at -20°C, even temporarily. Ship specimens Monday through Thursday only; hold specimens collected on Friday for shipping on Monday. Specimens should be received by the ISDH Laboratories within 5 days of collection.
4. For questions regarding collection, packaging or shipping of virology specimens, please call the ISDH Laboratories at 317-921-5500.